

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



## **Emergency Assistance Program (EA)**

Fiscal Year 2013, Fourth Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

August 7, 2013



**Department of Housing and Community Development**  
**EA Legislative Report**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

In FY13, 9,503 unique families applied for Emergency Assistance (EA), 3,008 of these families (31.7%) applied during the fourth quarter. A total of 4,272 families entered an EA shelter or hotel/motel during the fiscal year, while another 503 families were eligible for EA but chose a HomeBASE Household Assistance benefit<sup>1</sup> as an alternative to shelter. In the fourth quarter, 1,083 families entered an EA shelter or motel, 25.4% of the fiscal year's shelter/hotel/motel placements, and 59 families chose HomeBASE household assistance instead of shelter. The percentage of EA placements to applications was 38.0 for Quarter 4 and 50.2 percent for the fiscal year. This serves as a conservative proxy for the percentage of families determined EA eligible that does not account for families who may have been eligible for EA but refused a placement and includes families who did not complete their EA applications or provide required verifications.

Most families (58.3%) entering an EA shelter or hotel/motel during Quarter 4 were eligible due to a health and safety risk. Eviction was the reason for homelessness for 14.9 percent of families and domestic violence for another 13.6 percent. Of those families experiencing a health and safety risk, most (59.0%) were in irregular housing situations. 24.0 percent of these families were living in situations unfit for human habitation, and another 10.8 percent were experiencing health and safety problems related to their hosts' behavior (violent conduct, substance abuse, or mental illness).

The EA system ended the quarter and fiscal year with a caseload of 3,333 families, an 8.2 percent decrease since the beginning of the fiscal year and a 12.7 percent drop since the caseload peaked in November 2012. Because the contracted EA shelters units remained at capacity throughout the fiscal year, the declining caseload largely impacted the number of families in hotels/motels. At the end of the Quarter 4, there were 1,322 families in EA hotels/motels (39.7 percent of the total EA caseload). The hotel/motel caseload fell 18.3 percent since the beginning of FY13. Much of this decrease occurred from December through March and coincided with the issuance of a limited number housing subsidies through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP).

4,580 families exited EA shelter or hotels/motels in FY13. Of these families (21.4%) exited during the fourth quarter. 188 (19.2%) of families exiting in Quarter 4 left with an MRVP voucher. 51 of the families receiving an MRVP (5.2% of Quarter 4 exits) left the EA system with additional support from HomeBASE Household Assistance, while another 162 families (16.5%) left EA with HomeBASE household assistance only.

---

<sup>1</sup> HomeBASE Household Assistance provides up to \$4,000 during a 12-month period to support families in maintaining housing stability and avoiding homelessness.

**Department of Housing and Community Development**  
**EA Legislative Report**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

**EA Applications and Entries**

All Applications	SFY 2013 Quarter 4	Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Total
			April	May	June	
Families Applying to EA	3,008	2,210	863	1,126	1,019	9,503
Families Entering EA Shelter or HomeBASE	1,142	1,030	357	412	373	4,775
Families Entering EA Shelter	1,083	951	339	388	356	4,272
% of EA Eligible Entering Shelter	95%	92%	95%	94%	95%	89%
Families Entering HomeBASE	59	83	18	24	17	503
% of Eligible Entering HB	5%	8%	5%	6%	5%	11%

**Note:** Families applying for EA are an unduplicated count. Since families may apply multiple times, the sum of monthly data do not equal the quarterly total.

**Sources:** DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

**EA Health & Safety Assessments**

	SFY 2013 Quarter 4	Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Total
			April	May	June	
H&S Assessments Conducted by DCF	651	563	198	237	216	2,519
Families Determined at Risk	545	469	159	194	192	2,013
% Referrals at Risk	84%	83%	80%	82%	89%	80%
Shelter Diversions	106	94	39	43	24	669
% Referrals Diverted	16%	17%	20%	18%	11%	20%

**Source:** DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

**Department of Housing and Community Development  
EA Legislative Report  
Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

**EA Shelter Entries by Region  
Quarter 4, SFY13**

Regional Office	SFY 2013 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Total	
	# Families	% of Total		April	May	June	# Families	% of Total
<b>All Offices</b>	<b>1,083</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>4,272</b>	<b>100%</b>
Boston	259	24%	243	94	83	82	1,037	24%
Brockton	148	14%	154	32	67	49	571	13%
Fall River	16	1%	5	5	4	7	54	1%
Fitchburg	3	<1%	4	2	1	0	27	1%
Framingham	8	1%	30	6	2	0	97	2%
Greenfield	10	1%	7	2	5	3	37	1%
Holyoke	58	5%	44	17	26	15	223	5%
Hyannis	24	2%	16	8	7	9	73	2%
Lawrence	42	4%	48	15	12	15	231	5%
Lowell	42	4%	37	11	17	14	200	5%
Malden	70	6%	68	25	18	27	263	6%
New Bedford	16	1%	23	8	2	6	87	2%
North Shore (Salem)	67	6%	36	27	25	15	242	6%
Pittsfield/North Adams	4	<1%	1	1	1	2	8	<1%
Plymouth	5	<1%	5	0	4	1	25	1%
Revere/Chelsea	66	6%	74	20	24	22	302	7%
Southbridge	2	<1%	2	1	0	1	10	<1%
Springfield	187	17%	122	48	66	73	578	14%
Taunton	23	2%	11	8	7	8	58	1%
Worcester	33	3%	21	9	17	7	149	3%

**Source:** DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

**Department of Housing and Community Development  
EA Legislative Report  
Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

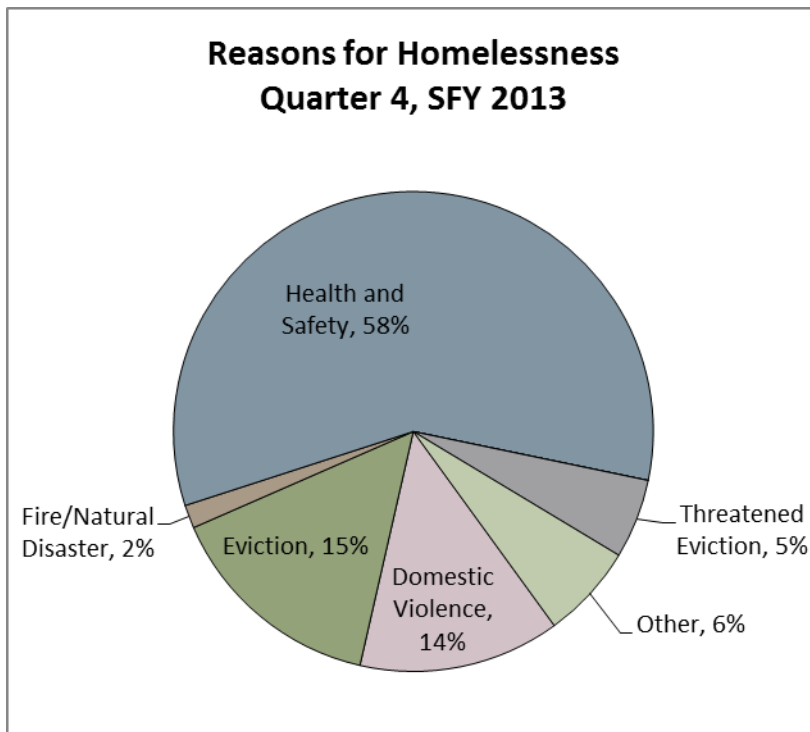
**Reason for Homelessness,  
Families Entering Shelter/Motels**

Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2013 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Total	
	# Families	% of Total		April	May	June	# Families	% of Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,083</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>4,272</b>	<b>100%</b>
Domestic Violence	147	14%	115	57	45	45	551	13%
Eviction	161	15%	166	52	59	50	821	19%
Fire/Natural Disaster	17	2%	14	8	5	4	63	1%
Health and Safety	631	58%	543	193	221	217	2,074	49%
Asked to Leave	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	231	5%
Overcrowding	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	184	4%
Threatened Eviction - Unauthorized Tenant	58	5%	58	12	27	19	118	3%
Other	69	6%	55	17	31	21	230	5%

**Notes:**

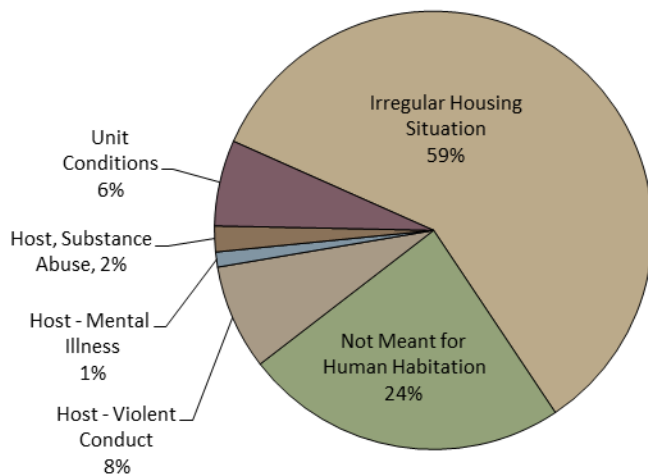
EA eligibility changes were implemented in September 2012 that eliminated "asked to leave" and "overcrowded" categories. "Threatened Eviction – Unauthorized Tenant" was added as an eligibility category in December 2012.

**Source:** DHCD Placement Unit data.



**Department of Housing and Community Development**  
**EA Legislative Report**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

**Health and Safety Reasons**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2013**



**Shelter Exits**

	SFY 2013 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2013			SFY 2013 Total	
	# Families	% of Total		April	May	June	# Families	% of Total
<b>Total Shelter/Motel Exits</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>4,580</b>	<b>100%</b>
Exiting with HomeBASE Only	162	17%	569	62	76	24	1,376	30%
Exiting with MRVP Only	137	14%	70	33	62	42	220	5%
Exiting with HomeBASE and MRVP	51	5%	344	22	0	29	529	12%
Other Exits	629	64%	448	181	212	236	2,455	54%

**Department of Housing and Community Development**  
**EA Legislative Report**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

**Shelter Costs**

<b>Daily Utilization by Shelter Type</b>	<b>Quarter 4 SFY 2013 Daily Usage</b>	<b>% of Total Daily Usage</b>	<b>Contracted Units</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Average Days in EA</b>	<b>Average Daily Rate</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Average Cost Per Family</b>
Shelter (Congregate and Scattered)	2,023	61%	2,023	260	\$117	\$30,420
Motel	1,267	39%	.	226	\$80	\$18,080
<b>All Families</b>	<b>3,290</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,023</b>			
Difference from Previous Quarter	171					
% Change from Previous Quarter	-4.9%					

**Notes:**

Shelter utilization is the daily number of contracted units.

Motel usage data indicate the average daily number of EA families staying in motels during the quarter.

Average length of stay was calculated using length of stay for families who exited shelter during the quarter and families who were still in shelters at the end of the quarter.

**Sources:** DHCD Management Report, DCHD Daily Entry Data, and BEACON Data Warehouse.

**Shelter Diversion Costs and Savings**

	<b>Quarter 4 Families Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance</b>	<b>Diversion Cost Per Family</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Total Diversion Cost</b>	<b>Average Shelter Cost Per Family</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Savings</b>
Shelter Diversions	59	\$4,000	\$236,000	\$24,330	\$1,199,470

**Notes:**

Diversion costs assume that all families receiving Household Assistance use the maximum \$4,000 benefit.

Average shelter costs are based on an EA average length of stay of 247 days at a daily rate of \$98.5 per day.

**Department of Housing and Community Development  
EA Legislative Report  
Quarter 4, SFY 2013**

**Housing Status of Families  
Receiving HomeBASE Rental Assistance**

<b>HomeBASE Rental Assistance Housing Status</b>	<b># of Families</b>	<b>% of HB Families</b>
Total Families Receiving HB Rental Assistance in FY12	7,201	100%
Families Still Receiving Rental Assistance	6,175	86%
Families No Longer Receiving Rental Assistance	1,026	14%
Violated Program/Lease Requirement or Fraud	384	5%
Moved to Subsidized Housing	218	3%
Moved Out of State	136	2%
Chose Not to Recertify or Voluntarily Left	79	1%
Is No Longer Eligible	48	1%
Changed Program Type	30	<1%
Evicted	19	<1%
Deceased	10	<1%
Other	102	1%

**Note:** Data indicates families still receiving HomeBASE rental assistance through June 2013.

**Source:** DHCD, TRACKER database.